DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 160 695 UD 018 641

TITLE Task Force Report on the Service Needs of the Non-English Speaking.
INSTITUTION Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations, Calif.
PUB DATE May 77
NOTE 15p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Communication Problems; Community Agencies (Public); Community Services; County Programs; Cultural Factors; *Ethnic Groups; *Language Handicaps; *Needs; *Non English Speaking; *Social Services
IDENTIFIERS *California (Los Angeles County)

ABSTRACT

The findings of a task force, appointed to investigate the communication gap between non-English speaking residents in Los Angeles County and available county services, are presented in this report. Two objectives dealt with are: (1) the consolidation of available data on foreign language groups in Los Angeles County and their approximate number and location; and (2) determination of the service needs of the non-English speaking, the level of language skills necessary to deliver each service and identification of those services requiring cultural sensitivity in addition to language skills. Major categories of service needs and general types of bilingual services are identified. A four-point program is proposed, requiring the involvement and cooperation of all county departments, to strengthen existing county bilingual programs and to better meet the unique service needs of the separate communities throughout the county. In addition, a listing of bilingual community agencies representing thirteen major non English speaking groups in Los Angeles County is provided. (Author/EB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED160695

UD 11/3/72

TASK FORCE REPORT ON THE SERVICE NEEDS OF THE NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Los Angeles County Commis on Human Relations

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

UD018641

SEP 25 1978

ROBERT W. BOYD
Executive Director

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

FORREST C. WEIR
President

May 16, 1977

Honorable Board of Supervisors
383 Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Gentlemen:

REPORT ON STUDY OF NON-ENGLISH
SPEAKING SERVICE NEEDS

On October 28, 1975, your Board ordered the creation of a Task Force to develop demographic and service need information on non-English speaking residents and proposals to strengthen related County service programs.

The Task Force was composed of representatives from Board offices, Chief Administrative Office, Department of Personnel and the Human Relations Commission. Valuable assistance and consultation were received also from the Department of Community Development; Dr. Russell Campbell, Chairman, Teaching English As a Second Language, UCLA; Marta Baca, President of Marta Baca and Associates; and Joyce Law, Director Chinatown Service Center.

Based on their study efforts, the Task Force has developed recommendations summarized below and detailed in the attachment that represent a major step towards closing the communication gap between non-English speaking persons in need and available County services. The proposed program provides for:

1. A one-year pilot telephone interpreter service to be operated through the County Neighborhood Service Center Program administered by the Community Development Department. This program will coordinate the non-English speaking service of all County departments and community agencies on a geographical basis that closely relates to community language characteristics.

3

2. Strengthening existing County services through (a) maintenance of a central roster of the names, locations and language skills of all County employees participating in the bilingual programs. (b) On-the-job training, and evaluation of department programs for employees receiving bilingual bonus with emphasis on specialized terminology and cultural sensitivity.

3. Development of a pool and central roster of community volunteers who can act as "standby" interpreters for less frequently encountered languages.

The proposed program will be financed with existing staff and CETA funds and entail no new County costs.

BACKGROUND

On October 28, 1975, the Human Relations Commission filed a report, with your Board, on the Joint Study of services to the non-English speaking. This report emphasized that the County bilingual bonus program is fragmented, unevaluated, lacks a training component, and fails to meet the needs of the non-English speaking public.

Recommendations in this report adopted by the Board called for the Task Force to gather specific demographic data on non-English speaking residents, and their unmet service needs for purposes of recommending actions to reinforce related County programs. The needed data and a summary of the findings are shown below and detailed in the attachment.

1. Consolidate available data on foreign language groups in Los Angeles County, their approximate number and location.

   The review showed that there are 13 language groups that seek County services with a major concentration of Spanish (94.8%) and Southeast Asian (2.5%) residents. Further questioning of agencies responding suggest that this figure includes Asians who were not readily identifiable as having national origins in Southeast Asia, but may have national origins near or adjacent to Southeast Asian countries.

2. Determine the service needs of the non-English speaking and the level of language skills necessary to deliver each service and identify those services requiring cultural sensitivity in addition to language skills.

   Task Force research revealed that there are eight major categories of service needs experienced by community agencies and five general types of help requested of County agencies as detailed in the attachment. The major need appears to be in the areas of information/referral, and

instructions on the processing of matters related to County services.

The inability to speak English makes it difficult to obtain medical, legal, and emergency services or information about available jobs. These are the key elements of a cycle which prevents full participation of the non-English speaking citizen in our society.

The Director of Personnel, the Director of Community Development and the Chief Administrative Officer concur in these recommendations.

THEREFORE, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Instruct the Department of Community Development to implement a pilot bilingual telephone referral service and volunteer interpreter programs in its Neighborhood Community Service Center activities as discussed in the attached report.

2. Instruct all County departments to cooperate with the Community Development and Personnel Departments in implementing measures discussed in the attached report to strengthen the County Bilingual Services program.

Respectfully,

Forrest C. Weir
President

TASK FORCE REPORT ON THE
SERVICE NEEDS OF THE NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING

January, 1977

Methodology

Data contained in this report was developed primarily through questionnaires sent to bilingual community groups, private agencies and County departments. Experts in the field were interviewed, and available data was also researched. Outlined below is full discussion of the three elements of the Board Order.

I. Consolidate available data on foreign language groups in L. A. County, their approximate number and location. Attachment II.

The Task Force study determined that available data on concentrations of non-English speaking residents is unreliable and at times, contradictory. However, we did find that bilingual community agencies specifically identify with language groups they serve and locate themselves where these groups appear to be concentrated. Therefore, although no definititive statement can be made on the numbers within each group by community location, a fairly accurate indication of the distribution of non-English language groups can be drawn from the numbers of private agencies established to meet service requirements, and their locations. There are 20 Spanish oriented age cies, 6 Asian, 2 Chinese, 30 Japanese, 3 Korean, 1 Samoan and 1 Tagalog, and 3 agencies that relate to all major groups. A listing of these is shown in Attachment I, by location.

While available data identifies five major non-English groups in Los Angeles County, our research revealed a total of thirteen, that seek County services, as shown below:

94.84%	Spanish	.07%	Tagalog
2.5%	Southeast Asians*	.02%	Samoan
1.7%	Chinese	.37%	Others (French, German, Arabic, Italian, Portugese, Russian)
.3%	Korean		
.2%	Japanese		

Consistent with the findings of previous surveys, our study results indicate a lack of information on "newly arrived" immigrant groups such as Southeast Asians, Koreans, and Samoans. Also, available data does not include information on dialects of some of the major language groups known to reside in Los Angeles County, such as Cantonese, Toisoan, etc.

* Further questioning of agencies, responding, suggest that this figure includes Asians who were not readily identifiable as having national origins in Southeast Asia but may have national origins near or adjacent to Southeast Asian countries.

II. Determine the service needs of the non-English speaking, the level of language skills necessary to deliver each service and identify those services requiring cultural sensitivity in addition to language skills.

The inability of the non-English speaking to communicate their needs and lack of a systematic method of disseminating information to them in their native tongue are their most prevalent problems. The inability to speak English not only makes it difficult for them to obtain medical, legal, and emergency services but also bars them from being employed by most employers (including Los Angeles County) even though they may be qualified to do the job. The language barrier makes it extremely difficult to secure necessary training for employment. This, coupled with the unavailability of information in his own language to inform him of services, training programs and jobs available, are the elements of a cycle which prevents the non-English speaker from functioning to capacity in our society.

To gather information on the service needs of the non-English speaking population, the Task Force devised two questionnaires: One for the community agencies serving the non-English speaking and the other for County departments. These questionnaires were designed to ascertain the nature of the contacts conducted and the level of service necessary to solve the problems posed.

A. COMMUNITY AGENCIES

The survey revealed the following eight major categories of service needs as identified by bilingual community agencies.

1. Information and Referral

Over 85% of the non-English speaking who contact community agencies are first and foremost seeking information. When possible these individuals are referred to the appropriate organization, such as the County of Los Angeles, for a resolution of their problems.

2. Written

Seventy-five percent of the non-English speaking seek help in completing forms or written correspondence, many in connection with services provided by County agencies.

3. Employment

Seventy percent seek help in finding employment.

4. Interpreting/Translating

Sixty-five percent seek help to interpret or translate for them when dealing with other agencies such as County departments.

5. English as a Second Language

Sixty percent seek classes in English proficiency.

6. Job Training/Counseling

Fifty-five percent seek job training or counseling programs.

7. Welfare/Health/Legal

Forty-five percent seek help in meeting welfare, health or legal needs.

8. Transportation

Forty-five percent require transportation to utilize public services.

B. COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

Questionnaires sent to all County departments revealed that some 36 departments have experienced the need to provide bilingual services. These services can be categorized into five general types.

1. Instructive Interviews

Seventy-five percent of the departments report giving instructions in a foreign language to recipients of County services on a daily basis (e.g., coroner to surviving relatives, arresting officer to offender, court to a defendant, etc.)

2. Information Interviews

Seventy-two and two-tenths percent of the departments report they must answer questions in a foreign language regarding welfare services, medical services, employment, and emergency services.

3. Completion of Forms

Sixty-six and seven-tenths percent of the departments provide bilingual assistance for the completion of forms or applications for their own and other services.

4. Interpretation of Signs

Sixty-three and nine-tenths percent of the departments become involved in directing clients to their destinations by interpreting signs for them.

5. Counseling Interviews

Fifty-two and eight-tenths percent of the departments provide indepth counseling in a foreigh language. This service requires both bi-cultural and bilingual ability and is the most sensitive of all interpreter services. It is in this area that training of bilingual employees is most important.

III. RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS IN STAFFING OR PROGRAM TO MEET IDENTIFIED PROGRAM NEEDS

To strengthen existing County bilingual programs and to better meet the unique service needs of the separate communities throughout the County, the Task Force is proposing a four-point program requiring the involvement and cooperation of all County departments as discussed below.

A. One year Pilot Program to link non-English speaking residents with County personnel who can provide needed assistance be implemented.

The key element of Task Force proposals calls for the establishment of a structured, community based, non-English speaking services program, that links local residents with specific persons in County departments who can provide needed assistance. The sixteen Neighborhood Community Service Centers (NCSC) operated by Community Development Department, are ideally suited for this purpose due to their strategic locations throughout the County and their close identification with communities where situated. The Director of Community Development agrees and has accepted responsibility for operation of this program and coordination with other County departments.

Implementation will entail Community Development formulating an operations plan and designating one individual in each of the NCSC's to function as a coordinator of all non-English speaking inquiries for his service area. Ideally, this person should speak the language of the major non-English speaking group in the community served by the NCSC.

The specific duties of the NCSC non-English speaking coordinator will include the following:

1. Maintaining a roster of all County employees participating in the

County Bilingual Bonus Programs by (1) department, (2) language skills, (3) phone/address, and (4) program responsibility. This information will be used to make referrals to specific County personnel who can provide needed assistance.

2. Recruitment, training and supervision of a cadre of community persons to serve as non-compensated colunteer interpreters. Particular efforts should be made to obtain volunteers with skills in uncommon dialects, and language skills in heavy demand. These volunteers will serve as assistant interpreters in the NCSC where assigned and as a resource to other NCSC's/County departments with unique language problems. Listings of volunteers by NCSC and language skills will be maintained by each of the sixteen NCSC coordinators. Since existing personnel and volunteers will be utilized, there are no new costs for this aspect of the plan.

B. County departments to compile a roster of County employees participating in the Bilingual Bonus Program

This is an important element to the successful operation of the recommended pilot program. Essentially, all County departments will be required to develop a listing of employees receiving the Bilingual Bonus by (1) service program, (2) address/phone number, and (3) language skills.

This listing should be developed within 30 days after Board approval of this report and updated every six months.

C. County departments to compile a glossary of terms germane to their functions, and that these glossaries be translated into those languages spoken by a significant number of its client population.

This glossary will facilitate communication of the most common technical terms to provide the fastest possible response to questions of a simple nature. It will be used by bilingual and other employees to assist clients in receiving adequate information.

D. County departments, in conjunction with the Department of Personnel, develop on-the-job training and evaluation program for employees receiving a Bilingual Bonus.

Some 36 County departments participate in the bilingual bonus program. This effort involves over 3,376 employees at a cost of approximately $600,000 per year. Employees receiving the bilingual bonus do not receive

specialized second language vocabulary training. Thus, although they speak the language they are often unable to provide clear information about the specific service needed.

The data supplied in the questionnaire returned by both community and County agencies make it apparent that demands for information and communication are varied and comprehensive.

An element that is difficult to define is those services that require cultural sensitivity. Certain gestures, speech patterns, and circumstances surrounding what might seem to be simple questions can produce varying reactions based on cultural considerations. This makes it especially important that an adequate training program be implemented for bilingual employees.

To ensure that these employees are familiar with the specialized terminology of their departments (e.g., legal, medical, etc.), training programs should be developed. Once the training programs are implemented, evaluation procedures should be devised to ensure that the training was effective.

In addition to integrity and knowledge of various subject fields, one essential quality of a good interpreter is willingness to admit inability to translate when context of a word or sentence or the sensitivity of the subject matter makes accurate translation difficult. The training of bilingual employees should be designed to stress this and to encourage use of community volunteers to supplement their efforts when necessary.

The Task Force believes that implementation of these recommendations will be a valuable step in meeting the service needs of the bilingual community and in helping us determine further modifications to present practices and procedures that might produce added benefits when the pilot program concludes.

CHR:rc
5/16/77

BILINGUAL COMMUNITY AGENCIES

ASIAN LANGUAGES

Asian American Community
Mental Health Training
1300 West Olympic Blvd., Rm 303
Los Angeles, Calif. 90015

Asian Community Center
1851 S. Westmoreland Ave.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90006

Asian Volunteer Action Center
621 South Virgil
Los Angeles, Calif. 90017

Oriental Service Center
1315 West 7th Street
Los Angeles, Calif. 90017

Reaching Out Services to Asian Women
1372 Willow
Long Beach, Calif. 90810

Westside Neighborhood Center
1327 West Willow
Long Beach, Calif. 90810

CHINESE LANGUAGES

Chinatown Service Center
818 N. Hill Street
Los Angeles, Calif. 90012

Chinatown Youth Council
Employment Service
626 New Depot Street
Los Angeles, Calif. 90012

JAPANESE

J.A.C.S. - A.L. Office
125 Weller St., Room 305
Los Angeles, Calif. 90012

Japanese Chamber of Commerce
125 Weller Street
Los Angeles, Calif. 90012

Japanese Community Pioneer Center
125 Weller
Los Angeles, Calif. 90012

KOREAN

Korean-American Social Health
and Education Society of So. Calif.
1517 Fourth Avenue
Los Angeles, Calif. 90019

Korean Association of So. Calif.
2595 W. Olympic Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90006

Korean Hotline Service Center
1851 S. Westmoreland Ave.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90006

SAMOAN

Samoan Community Council
Carson Community Center
404 E. Carson St.
Carson, Calif. 90745

TAGOLOG

Pilipino Community Center
1740 West Temple St.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90026

SPANISH

Casa Cataline
929 S. Catalina
Los Angeles, Calif. 90006

Centro Chicano
3406 S. Hoover
Los Angeles, Calif. 90007

Centro de Accion Social Autonoms
2673 W. Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90004

Chicano Ex-Pintos Assoc.
c/o Community Concern Corp.
2411 N. Broadway
Los Angeles, Calif. 90031

Chicana Service Action Center
1226 S. Atlantic Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90022

Community Service Organization
2213 Whittier Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90023

East Los Angeles Mental Health
Training Center
741 S. Atlantic Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90023

East Los Angeles Service Center
929 N. Bonnie Beach Place
Los Angeles, Calif. 90063

Escuelita de la Raza
2600 E. Seventh St.
Long Beach, Calif.

Euclid Center
1641 Wandering Drive
Monterey Park, Calif. 91754

League of United Latin American
Citizens - LULAC
1443 W. Kettering St.
Lancaster, Calif. 93534

Mexican-American Opportunities Foundation
2834 Whittier Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90023

Model Cities Center for Law and Justice
2111 E. Brooklyn Ave.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90033

Narcotics Prevention Project
507 S. Echandia St.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90033

Spanish con't

Neighborhood Youth Association
607 Sixth Avenue
Venice, Calif. 90291

Norwalk Social Services Center
11929 E. Alondra
Norwalk, Calif. 90650

Rio Hondo Area Action Council, Inc.
9846 S. Jersey Avenue
Santa Fe Springs, Calif. 90670

SER
2434 E. First St.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90036

12124 East Front St.
Norwalk, Calif. 90659

9841 Airport Street
Los Angeles, Calif. 90022

TELAC
1330 S. Atlantic Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90022

ALL MAJOR LANGUAGE GROUPS

International Institute of
Southern California
435 S. Boyle Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90012

E. Manfred Evans Community Adult School
717 N. Figueroa St.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90012

Special Services for Groups, Inc.
2400 S. Western Avenue
Los Angeles, Calif. 90018

DATA REVIEWED

1. SURVEY OR REPORTS ON MINORITY POPULATION
   Arthur Young Company 1976

2. CENSUS OF CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING AND LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING PUPILS
   California State Department of Education, 1972

3. LANGUAGE SURVEY
   California State Department of Motor Vehicles, 1975

4. ANGELENOS ON THE MOVE
   Greater Los Angeles Community Action Agency, 1975

5. UNITED WAY COMPUTER PRINTOUTS
   Based on 1970 Census